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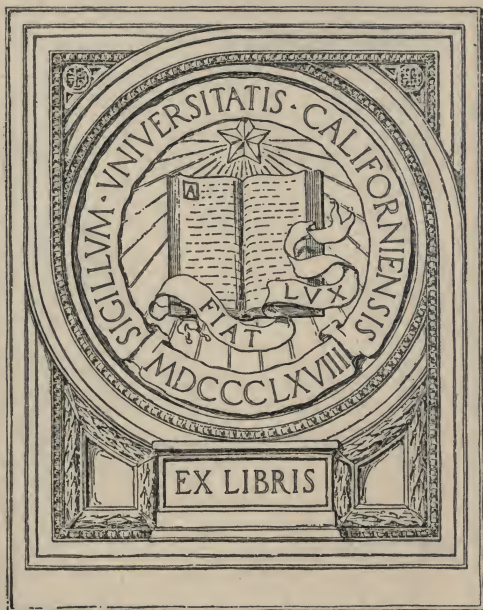
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# DIVINE IMAGE




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# THE DIVINE IMAGE

*A BOOK OF LYRICS*



# THE DIVINE IMAGE

A BOOK OF LYRICS

By

CAROLINE GILTINAN

*"For this, for this the lights innumerable  
As symbols shine that we the true light win:  
For every star and every deep they fill  
Are stars and deeps within."*

A. E. (George W. Russell)



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IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF  
*My Mother*  
HELEN McCAFFREY GILTINAN



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For permission to reprint certain poems in this book thanks are due to the editors and proprietors of *Lippincott's Magazine*, *The Catholic World*, *The Queen's Work*, *The Poetry Journal*, *The Poetry Review*, *The Boston Transcript*, *The Philadelphia North American*, and the *Anthology of Magazine Verse* for 1915 and 1917. Appreciation is expressed to William Stanley Braithwaite for his unfailing kindness and encouragement.



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# THE DIVINE IMAGE

*A BOOK OF LYRICS*





## THE BREEZE::

Something touched me as I  
walked

Beneath the silent trees—

A soft caress against my lips—

It may have been a breeze;

But with it came the thought of  
you

And all you've grown to mean.

A wandering wind,—or was it  
you:

A messenger unseen?

The bright new leaves grew very  
still;

They did not dance or play.

Nor did my heart—for, in a  
breath,

The breeze had gone away.

## OVER NIGHT, A ROSE

That over night a rose could  
come

I, one time did believe,  
For when the fairies live with  
one,

They wilfully deceive.  
But now I know this perfect thing  
Under the frozen sod  
In cold and storm grew patiently  
Obedient to God.

My wonder grows, since knowl-  
edge came

Old fancies to dismiss;  
And courage comes. Was not the  
rose

A winter doing this?  
Nor did it know, the weary  
while,

What color and perfume  
With this completed loveliness  
Lay in that earthy tomb.

So maybe I, who cannot see  
What God wills not to show,  
May, some day, bear a rose for  
Him  
It took my life to grow.

## THE COWARD

It lies before my wounded feet:  
The cross I am to bear.  
Blocking my path, it frightens me  
To see it lying there.

And yet I dare not turn away,  
Nor yet dare go around.  
God! give me strength to carry it:  
The thing upon the ground!

## WHEN DARKNESS COVERED THE EARTH

Blood-guilty with blood of the  
Sinless One  
And tortured by memory,  
Three wretched men, ere the night  
had run,  
Travelled from Calvary.

Sharing their grief and bitter fear,  
(Since hatred had gone with the  
sun!)  
Shudderingly, each man asked to  
hear  
What work the others had done.

"I am the one who plaited  
The crown of briar and thorn.  
God! how His hair was matted!  
God! how His head was torn!"

“And I, when He asked, denied  
Him

A draught from my brimming  
grail.”

“Woe, woe—unto me, I despised  
Him

And drave through His hand the  
nail.”

## CLOUDS

*(A child speaks)*

Those fleecy, white and floating  
things

They are the backs of angels'  
wings.

They can't be impolite, you know,  
And turn to look on us below,  
But always keep their faces  
toward

Our Lady Mary and the Lord.

Yet, I can guess what lovely  
things

Are hidden by those angel-wings.

## THE COURTYARD PIGEONS

Dear birds, that flutter happily  
Against the grey stone wall,  
That hides the joyous sun from  
me,

Do you not hear my call?  
Each weary day when you go  
past

To strut and perch up there,—  
Or when you soar away so fast,  
I watch you,—and I care:  
For, in your iridescent flight,  
My eyes have learned to see  
How, in this strange and man-  
made night,

One thing, at least, goes free.  
And do you know what you have  
taught

In low and cooing cries?



Though much is gone, they have  
not bought  
The part of me that flies!

MARY FITTON,  
TO MASTER  
WILL SHAKESPEARE

*"The better angel is a man right  
fair,  
The worser spirit a woman col-  
or'd ill.  
To win me soon to hell, my fe-  
male evil  
Tempteth my better angel from  
my side  
And would corrupt my saint to  
be a devil  
Wooing his purity with her foul  
pride."*

So long a time, and is it fair to  
keep  
My image darkened in your  
bitter word  
That stabs my heart, though  
dust, as if a sword

Turned there to wound, and made  
the wound more deep?  
Had I been foul, would both your  
angels weep?  
Though the times spurned, to  
me a singing bird  
Your vision came in music my  
being heard  
Color'd with Prospero's island-  
haunted sleep.

Why was I blind, when most I  
wished to see—  
Accepting less than what was  
tossed away:  
Unknowing then, this world  
beyond what seems—  
This world from which you have  
exilèd me?  
Around your moods, I, as your  
angel, play;  
And am a part of all your  
greatest dreams!

## MY HEART IS FULL OF VAGRANT SONGS

My heart is full of vagrant songs  
That, flashing to and fro,  
Escape the words which covet  
    them  
And tease me as they go.

But in the woods they seldom  
    come;  
Underneath the trees  
My songs are silent, for I hear  
More lovely sounds than these.

The stream is dashing over rocks:  
Two voices can be heard.  
From where the green is still and  
    thick  
Come the love-notes of a bird.

## MATER SALVATORIS

Against thy breast and covered  
with thy hair

Christ Jesus lay, for God so  
trusted thee

His only Son was born — dear  
mystery! —

A helpless Baby, needing all thy  
care.

Sweet Mary, was He even then  
aware —

The little Saviour shepherds  
came to see

In Bethlehem — that to His  
Calvary

Thy love must follow and His  
Passion share?

And ever since, each sinner is thy  
child

For whom thy tender pity doth  
beseech;

My Blessed Lady, take me to  
my Brother.

He would forgive, if only once  
He smiled:

With memories, His heart of  
mercy reach,

For God is Love and thou—  
thou art His Mother.

# WANTING SO THE FACE DIVINE

To M——

Wanting so the Face divine,  
I searched within this soul of  
mine,  
But there the Image is so dim:  
Unlike, unlike, it seems to Him.

Weary of heart, with faith grown  
weak,  
Again, the vanished Face I seek.  
Lo! in my need, God sends me  
*thee:*  
And from thy soul, He smiles on  
me!

## THE LITTLE MAID

Three Saints of Heaven wanted,  
long ere thy life began,  
One perfect little earth-child and  
asked God for *thee*, Jeanne.

Saint Michael, strong and valiant;  
Saint Margaret, mother, queen;  
Saint Catherine, virgin, saw thee,  
a little maid, thirteen.

Then each one came to visit thee,  
bewildered, frightened child,  
And each one gave a gift most rare  
to still thy heart so wild.

Saint Catherine kept thee chaste  
and sweet; Saint Michael, like  
a man;

Thy beauty, courage, strength of  
soul, Saint Margaret mothered,  
Jeanne.

Each Saint so loved thee each one  
stayed a constant guardian . . .



They saved thee for the Sacred  
Breast whose Heart most loves  
thee, Jeanne!

## MAGIC

A world transformed! There  
flashes

One vivifying gleam:  
My heart, the tabernacle,  
I, warder of the Dream.

## REALISM

Did planning bugs and toads and  
worms

Make the Creator sad?

Well, at the Thought of wooded  
hills,

I think that God was glad.

## WOULD THE SKY BE BEAUTIFUL?

Would the sky be beautiful if it  
were not blue;

And if the grass were not so green

Would crocuses peep through?

Suppose the morn came silently

Without this burst of song;

And had we never loved, my dear,

Would all our days seem long?

But God has made the sky all  
blue;

The grass a vivid green;

While just beneath the softened  
mold,

A garden grows unseen.

And I—I call thee through the  
dawn

When birds awake to sing:

Oh, Life is full of mystery:

Belovèd, it is Spring!

## ALL THAT I LOVE

All that I love lies sleeping  
Under a new-made mound.

To-night I see the sky again:  
And the moon is nearly round.

## “VIVE LA FRANCE!”

In a crowded car we crossed the  
bridge,  
Packed in like silly sheep  
With more than one resenting  
A rudely broken sleep.  
The river slowly sullen,  
The sky a sordid grey,  
And drizzling rain combined to  
make  
A dull and cheerless day.  
Arrestingly, we saw it:  
A poorly printed scrawl  
In chalk which stood out clearly  
Against an old black wall.  
Life suddenly grew vital  
In one, swift, thrilling glance:  
A heart and soul had blazoned  
there  
The letters: “VIVE LA FRANCE!”

## DURANCE

My friend, God-given with the  
years,  
This night of agony  
Too deep and sharp for words or  
tears,  
I offer all for thee.

Where is the feeling heart of me?  
A thing of stone lies there:  
Can waiting, helpless misery  
And speechless grief be prayer?

## CHIPS

On brooks and rivers, creeks and  
streams,  
Were logs and rafts and chips  
afloat;  
But on some shore, dreaming its  
dreams,  
A worthless chip said: "I'm a  
boat.  
To mid-stream waters I must go;  
Here the eddies only play,  
There I'll feel the ebb and flow.  
I think I'll make the trip today."

Yet, the shore line held it fast,  
Helpless, hopeless, always  
twirled,  
And the hurrying boats went past  
While the chip unceasing swirled.  
Then he came — a little child —  
To the bank to sail a ship



And, with rapture almost wild,  
He saw one in the lonely chip.

With boyish, laughing, shouting  
joy

He worked to set the new boat  
loose;

It sailed, a bobbing, happy toy —  
A chip that realized its use.

And I, a woman, idly float  
Quite near the shore, a useless  
chip.

I pray a Child who wants a boat  
Believes I am His waiting ship.

## CERTAINTY

Sleep, darling, in my arms  
Nestled close against my breast,  
Here you're safe from all harms,  
And so, we both know rest.  
Your roughened head fills so well  
The warm nest God made to fit;  
Your soft flesh, relaxing, fell  
Clinging and content in it.

Your sweet, moist breath, and  
each start  
Tell me of the coming goal.  
Selfish I press to my heart  
The body of the dreaming soul,  
(Begging so) and whisper lowly,  
Wanting a good-bye from you,  
And the heavy lids lift slowly:  
"Yes; me lub you. Sure I do!"

## AFTER DARK

When muzzer and me go up the  
stairs,

I undress quick and say my  
prayers.

And den, when all of dem is said,  
And jes' before I hop in bed,

My muzzer and me, we has a  
chat;

We hug and kiss — I 'member  
dat.

I'm almost t'ree and getting tall —  
An' after dat,— why dat is all!

## COST

Little Boy in the manger  
Who saved a world from woe,  
Did You lie there freezing?  
She could not have it so!  
Snuggled against her throbbing  
    breast,  
Wrapped in her own soft hair,  
Warmth You shared with every  
    breath,  
Happy and peaceful there.

But when You left her shielding  
    arms,  
Saviour of fallen men,  
Bitter cold You did endure,—  
She could not warm You then!  
She could not warm Your Body;  
She could not bear Your Rod;  
She bore, instead, a bleeding  
    heart.  
Oh, were we worth it, God?

## CRY OF THE CHILDLESS

My baby never came!  
He is but dream and name!  
These empty arms so curve and  
ache  
Feed their hunger. For Christ's  
sake  
Lift this grief, of me a part,  
From my lonely breaking heart.  
Let my breasts his pressure feel!  
God of Pity, make him real!

## PROTEST

Handmaid of a swift machine,  
She acts her weary part;  
While loud above the clanging  
noise  
Beats her rebellious heart.

Poor prisoner! it pleads for life  
With protest ceaseless, strong,  
Against these sterile, empty years  
So endless and so wrong!

She is denied her rightful task,  
Debarred from Nature's plan:  
A fettered slave of a machine,  
Not mother of a man!

## SHACKLED

In stress and strain and whirr of  
things

That complicate life so,  
We hide an instinct's perfect  
wings

And dare not let them show.

They know,— the bush, the bird,  
the bee,—

Their part, so old, yet new;  
Do all things know, save you and  
me,

The work that they must do?

The prayerful wish for work  
denied

Has set my spirit free.  
If but, for us, 'twere simplified  
As for that budding tree.

## TO MY VICTROLA

Within this mute Victrola lie  
strangely prisoned joys!  
“Not music”? Well, what is it?  
. . . How can you call it  
“noise.”

When twilight comes to hurt me  
with memories I fear,  
(For we were once so happy and  
now — he is not here)  
I bid this friend of melody the  
stabbing silence break  
And in the dusk, it comforts me  
and lessens sorrow's ache.  
I hear James Whitcomb Riley  
his quaintest story tell;  
Or Schubert leads my heart within  
some eerie, woodland dell.  
When Gadske sings the “Ave,”  
great Gounod's music-prayer,  
My soul seeks out “Maria” and  
asks for strength to bear;



Or Melba sings the lovely songs  
of many years ago;  
And, for a change, there is a  
waltz from Victor Herbert's  
show;  
Then Lauder sings of lassies and  
other Scottish folk  
Until we hum the lilting air  
and chuckle at his joke.  
If very brave, I listen to Caruso's  
maddened cry:  
"Aïda! ah, Celeste!" he sobs; so,  
in my heart, do I!  
There's Kreisler and Maud  
Powell; the love-songs from  
"Boheme"  
And "Butterfly"; with lesser  
things we know without their  
name.  
Each record brings its different  
mood. When gone,—the lin-  
gering light,—

And stars come flickering through  
the dark and it is nearly night,  
I want a bit of Chopin with pas-  
sion's throbbing spell,  
Where, even in his "Funèbre," it  
only ebbs to swell.  
Then, at the close, McCormack  
who tenderly will sing  
A ballad of his Ireland and make  
"God bless you!" ring,  
For if I close my burning eyes,  
another man I see  
And through the dark, I feel his  
arms, and — "hear him calling  
me!"  
"Not music?" *This*: the power  
whose poignant, piercing tone  
Can baffle night and loneliness  
until I'm *not* alone?

## RODIN'S "HAND OF GOD"

It is God's great Hand  
Holding two He planned.  
They, from all else whirled,  
One in the other furred,  
Fill the only place  
Their own in vast space.  
With arms tightly clasped,  
Love's mystery is unasked.  
Life to life is given.—  
Marble, man-riven!

## HIS WOMAN

In the pale, murmuring dawn she  
lay  
Alone, with nothing more to lose.  
Her eyes one soft white arm  
espied  
And lips too tired to voice her  
pride  
Caressed and kissed a bruise.

## TRADITION

Above, about, they flutter:  
Dim hands of women long since  
dead

Who touch me lovingly.  
These women of my ancient line,  
Each with her part in me,  
Are banded now against myself —  
The self I want to be.

Frightened, they beg me to re-  
turn;

And, clutching, hold me so!—

Help me escape these phantom  
hands:

Belovèd, must I go?

## THE SISTERS

Only to blur it: the vision!

Only to feel less *alive*

To be freed from this wish to  
surrender

Against which I always must  
strive.

To cease, for one instant, this  
thinking;

To know only joy,— and not sin.

Unwelcome one guest: the grey  
stranger

Who came when my Love en-  
tered in.

Why need my heart fight against  
me?

For succor, I reach out my  
hand

To her whom they stoned in  
Samaria . . .

*God!* how we two *understand!*

## THE HUNGRY

Whom does He love the most —  
The poor, the sick, the blind,  
The rich, the maimed, the host  
Unknowingly unkind?

The ones who strive, and fail;  
The ones who have, and lose;  
The ones who will not quail  
Nor martyrdom refuse?

The wind went sobbing low  
To His great Heart and cried:  
“Dear God, they need you so,—  
Who die unsatisfied.”

## BEFORE THE DAWN

At night, sweetheart, I am with  
thee,  
For dreaming sleep unfetters me;  
And, when released, my soul goes  
where  
Her truest, purest thought may  
dare.

Reluctantly, she comes away—  
A captive to the bonds of day—  
And leaves one lovely word un-  
said:  
Dear, must it wait till we are  
*dead?*



## THE INTERLOPER

She played with Love: the little  
god.

This pink and chubby boy  
Was asking soon to own her heart,  
For Love will have his toy.

Then bolder waxed the prankish  
Love

Before he stole away;  
Nor has he yet returned the heart  
She cries for night and day.

A strange, strong man withholds  
it now,—

A man of flame and fire! —  
Love is full-grown: the little god  
In manhood, is Desire.

## PROFICIENT

One time I feared (before I knew  
The man you've grown to be)  
That you would never understand  
This complicated me.  
That fear is dead! Another one  
As urgent, bids me tell:  
When you are listening to my  
heart,  
You understand too well!

## MATED

At last I see him undisguised —  
Unkind, unclean, uncouth,—  
Deceiving dream, come back and  
hide  
The terror of the truth.

## ABSENCE

All melody comes to me muted;  
All time — one eternal, dull day!  
The heavens and earth have been  
looted:  
The soul of my world is away!

## TOLL

Love seemed a fearsome foe!  
Alarmed,  
Her breast she guarded 'gainst his  
dart.

Love came, a laughing god, un-  
armed,  
And slipped two hands beneath  
her heart.

But, all the while, Love played  
his game:  
The happy time he made his  
stay,—  
Though empty-handed when he  
came,  
Not so, the Love that went away.

## THE CHANGELING

Until you came, he lived with me:  
My dream-child to be born  
some day;

And, with our hopes, so happily  
The boy and I once dared to  
play.

But now, when he has grown so  
real —

This child who would become  
your son! —

My trembling flesh shrinks from  
the feel

Of him — poor, little, wistful  
one.

So, from my breast your babe I  
tear

(God! if I dared to let him  
stay!)

And strangle what I must not  
bear:

Nor shall you drag my hands  
away!

## THE CONJURER

Dear little one, with tender heart  
You gave to me a kiss unsought  
And in a sudden holiness,  
I felt the sacred gift it brought.

With bending soul, I signed the  
cross —  
That blessing which begins my  
prayer —  
Because thy seeking baby lips  
Discovered mine and rested there.

From out the potent, silent dusk  
My own dream-children came  
and smiled.  
You were not *then*, as now you  
are:  
Another woman's little child.



## REAPING

My son and I together saw  
The man (for whom I blindly  
bore  
This child, who never should  
have been)  
Slip down the fatal road of sin.

For dying Love, there are no  
cries.

God! help me look into these eyes,  
Too pure for pity, where I see:  
“Why, mother, were you false to  
me?”

## THE RANSOM

He did not know (nor would he  
care,)

What blocked the road to Hell;  
And yet he found it lying there  
When, striking it, he fell.

But he divined that he must go  
Over the road he came,  
And turning left it broken so,  
Unconscious of his shame.

A woman (seeming from the  
dead,)

After he did depart,  
Came where the road was stained  
with red,  
And, stooping, touched her heart.

## ACHIEVEMENT

The biggest thing I ever did  
Was all inside of me.  
There was a battle, hardly won,  
With only God to see.

When I plucked out a flaming  
brand  
Whose evil light shone through,  
The place it burned was black and  
charred . . .  
But no one ever knew!

## THE SACRIFICE

On Calvary, when Christ was dying,

A woman bitterly was crying  
To Michael of the flaming sword :  
"Command thy host! Avenge the  
Lord!"

And Michael, waiting the One  
call,  
Watched and suffered through it  
all.

Then, while he stood with sword  
unsheathed,  
The tortured God His Law be-  
queathed:

"Forgive thy brother from thy  
heart;

I ask of thee the greater part."  
Though Hell itself the death de-  
nounced,

Saint Michael all revenge re-  
nounced.

So, bitterly the woman cried  
On Calvary,—for Jesus died.

## THE THIRTEENTH STATION

Once you journeyed with Him,  
Mary —  
With your Son Who died for  
me —  
Sharing all He had to suffer  
On the way to Calvary.

With the expiation over,  
When they laid Him on your  
breast,  
Did a little gladness tremble  
That, at last, your Son could rest?

Mother Mary, had you comfort  
Though He lay there, dead and  
torn,  
Taking from the Head of Jesus  
That embedded crown of thorn?

## TESTIMONY

I stood on guard in Pilate's court  
the day they brought Him  
there,—

A beaten Man Who wore a  
crown of thorns with regal air.

I watched while Pilate sentenced  
Him to suffering and death;

He stood alone and motionless  
with calm and even breath.

To die is not an easy thing, yet  
that is what He heard;

Then, turning 'round, He looked  
at us but never said a word.

One of the guard, I went along,  
though I had asked to stay,

And it was I who walked with  
Him through all that awful  
day.

He took the cross in silence,— a  
clumsy, wooden thing,—

And looked, absorbed and listening,  
toward birds that dared to  
sing.

The way was rough and stony for  
feet so bare and white;

His hair was clotted thick with  
blood which blinded half His  
sight.

The first time that He staggered  
beneath His heavy load,

We cursed and beat and kicked  
Him as He fell upon the road;

But when His Mother came to  
Him, He straightened up and  
smiled

And whispered something as He  
passed, as though she were His  
child.

But after that He needed help—  
so, fearing that He might die,

We called the strong man, Simon,  
who was idly standing nigh.



One woman named Veronica  
came near to wipe His face;

Then suddenly she kissed the  
cloth and hurried from the  
place.

It seemed for miles — we travelled  
on; the sun grew hot and then  
With one sharp, little moan of  
pain, the Man fell down again.

Soon after noon we met a group  
of women; they all cried

And some drew close; He touched  
a child in passing and He  
sighed.

To each He gave some comfort.

On leaving them, He fell

And then I heard some muttered  
words,—one Heaven, and one  
Hell.

On Calvary, we stripped Him,—  
a fine, well-muscled Man,—

And when we threw Him on the  
cross, the hammering began.  
I am no girl,—I've killed my  
men — my record's brave and  
clean;

But courage such as this Man  
showed, I never yet have seen.  
We finished nailing through the  
hands;—the feet required one  
nail,

. . . He never deigned to cry  
aloud; He knew not how to  
fail.

But when we raised the cross up-  
right, He saw a grove of trees  
And eyes half-blind from agony  
smiled at the young green  
leaves.

We stood around to listen, for  
from the cross He spoke;  
The sorrow which He seemed to  
feel was all for other folk.

Three hours He hung dying . . .  
I scarcely dare to think  
Of all that time. He begged me  
once to let Him have a drink;  
And once He called His Father  
. . . and afterward, came peace.  
When He sank dead upon the  
cross, why should I feel release?

As they drew near,— His follow-  
ers, the Mother and the rest,—  
The beauty they call Magdalen  
wept loud and struck her breast;  
The others tried to talk to her of  
Jesus and His laws,  
But she would not be comforted  
and cried: "I am the cause!"  
A man called John was cherish-  
ing the Mother while she wept.  
Each one of these seemed far  
away; they were as if they slept.  
But when they took Him from  
the cross, her arms were opened  
wide,—

And then again we saw the blood  
still flowing from His side.

She held Him tight against her  
breast the while she sobbed and  
said:

“Heart of my Heart, I under-  
stand; and can be glad You’re  
dead!”

They placed Him in the sepul-  
chre (I watched until the  
close);

The Man lay dead almost three  
days; but afterward — HE  
ROSE!





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